

June 19, 2023

Community-led Housing Campaign Update

Key Messages:

- We believe that we all want to fix this crisis.
- We have all acknowledged it exists, and that we all have a role to play.
- We are not blaming City Hall or Council for this crisis.
- Guelph is among many municipalities facing this crisis, but we do not believe we need to wait to see what others do to take action.
- We are asking for a different kind of political and moral leadership from the City – one that reflects the complexity and seriousness of the housing crisis in Guelph.

Our request is to work together on these issues now. (E.g. working group on these priorities, especially in advance of a July council workshop).

We commit to do our part to support you in getting the work done; we will call out private-sector obstruction when necessary, and we will acknowledge and celebrate progress.

June 12, 2023

Community-led Housing Plan – FAQ

What is the problem?

- Guelph has a housing crisis.
- Solving this crisis requires our community - our leadership, industry and citizens - to do things that have not been done before. We must produce more homes at an unprecedented level across the housing continuum.
- We know that we cannot do these extraordinary things with a “business-as-usual” mindset. In fact, we must be bold in our vision, recruit everyone to the cause and put a dedicated person in place with the ability to proceed with solutions.
- To date we have not seen evidence of a plan of action nor any individual who is responsible for making that plan happen.
- We ask that the elected leaders and official decision makers of our community put these elements in place and act now.

What are you asking for?

- The housing crisis in Guelph is complex; it spans across the housing continuum; from emergency shelter for homeless individuals, to affordable options for low-income individuals, to market rates beyond the reach of many people in our community.
- We believe two critical elements for success remain:
 - Ownership of the problem - having a plan of action that is linked directly to the complex problem.
 - Responsibility for action - having someone in place with the authority and resources to act and accountability for results.

- To that end, a growing community collaboration from across the housing, social and healthcare continuum is requesting that these elements be put in place. An effective plan includes the following components and can answer the respective questions:
 - Strategy – what are we doing; what does success look like?
 - Goals – what things do we need to do to achieve this success?
 - Tactics – what resources and capacities are required to enable action in service to our goals?
 - Accountability – how are we doing; are we on the right or wrong track as we go?
- We ask that the elected leaders and official decision makers of our community put these elements in place and act now.

Why is the Chamber of Commerce leading this?

- Guelph’s business community is a part of this community.
- We know that businesses are an essential component of a thriving and prosperous community. And that a community that is prosperous and thriving is good for business.
- Guelph’s Chamber of Commerce has expertise and experience in convening people and organizations.
- The Guelph Chamber believes that it is imperative that we address the housing crisis – for the well-being and continued prosperity of our community.

Isn’t this a provincial issue? Doesn’t the County of Wellington have a role?

- Yes! The Province has a critical role in solving this complex problem.
- Yes, the County has a critical service provider role too.
- But the City of Guelph has the responsibility for determining the best plan to fix this problem and then work on ensuring that the Province and County play their parts – as funders, as policy enablers, as service providers
- We can’t simply wait for others to fix the problem for us.
- This is our community, this issue impacts us, our fellow citizens and neighbours.
- We believe two critical elements for success remain:
 - Ownership of the problem - having a plan of action that is linked directly to the complex problem.
 - Responsibility for action - having someone in place with the authority and resources to act and is accountable for results.
- We ask that the elected leaders and official decision makers of our community put these elements in place and act now.
- #bettercantwait

Why don’t the developers just take less profit?

- The housing crisis is a system failure and everyone has a role to play in solving this problem – including but not limited to homebuilders and developers.
- Developers are integral to the solution, without more housing supply of all types, the problem will get worse.

- They are employers and community members in the business of building homes – it cannot be expected that they do this work for free or at a loss.
- Developers take on massive financial and operational risks every day in an effort to build homes.
- Developers in the community are part of this community coalition – because this is their community too.
- We believe two critical elements for success remain:
 - Ownership of the problem - having a plan of action that is linked directly to the complex problem.
 - Responsibility for action - having someone in place with the authority and resources to act and is accountable for results.
- We ask that the elected leaders and official decision makers of our community put these elements in place and act now. #bettercantwait

Why are we also talking about homelessness, and the social and healthcare continuum?

- This is our community, our fellow citizens and neighbours.
- Addressing people’s diverse social and economic needs is critical for community wellbeing.
- We ask that the elected leaders and official decision makers of our community put these elements in place and act now. #bettercantwait